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Government Assistance to American Exporters



DISTRICT OFFICES

NEW YORK: Room 409, United States Customhouse
BOSTON: 752 Oliver Building
CHICAGO: 629 Federal Building
ST. LOUIS: 402 Third National Bank Building
ATLANTA: 521 Post Office Building
NEW ORLEANS: 1020 Hibernia Bank Building
SAN FRANCISCO: 307 United States Customhouse
SEATTLE: 922 Alaska Building

WASHINGTON
GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE
1915

What the Bureau Does.

The Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce is charged by law with the duty of "developing the various manufacturing industries of the United States and markets for their products at home and abroad, by gathering and publishing useful information, or by any other available method."

The Bureau is a clearing house for commercial information of all kinds, and has a well-organized and efficient system for its collection and distribution.

The Bureau furnishes American manufacturers and exporters definite information as to specific opportunities to sell their goods in foreign countries. (See p. 5.)

It edits and publishes consular reports on commercial subjects.

It tabulates and publishes statistics of American trade with foreign countries.

It collects, translates, and publishes customs tariffs of foreign countries.

It formulates instructions for the commercial work of the consular service.

It has a corps of commercial agents who visit foreign countries and make reports upon special industries and special phases of commerce.

It maintains a staff of 10 commercial attachés, stationed in the principal countries of the world, who devote all their time to commercial studies.

It has district offices in New York, Chicago, New Orleans, San Francisco, Seattle, Boston, Atlanta, and St. Louis, through which it disseminates trade information and keeps in touch with the commercial interests of the country.

Sources of Foreign Trade Facts.

The Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce has three principal sources from which it obtains trade information from foreign countries.

Consular Service.—The United States Government maintains abroad nearly 300 consular offices and in addition many agencies. These consular officers furnish the Bureau a great fund of information relating to the trade of their districts, including annual reviews of commerce, special reports called for by the Department of Commerce, lists of importers, notices of bids for contract work, requests of merchants to be placed in communication with American exporters, etc.

Commercial agents.—Most of these men are taken from active work in some particular industry or some special branch of commerce and are experts

in their respective lines. They travel widely and make reports as to methods of manufacture and special requirements in the lines that they are investigating.

Commercial attachés.—While stationed at one post like the consular officer, the commercial attaché is free to travel within the field to which he is assigned. He has but one function—the facilitation of commerce between the United States and the country to which he is assigned. Each attaché speaks the language of the country in which he is located and is thoroughly conversant with its commercial usages.

In addition, the Bureau receives numerous official and other publications from foreign countries, which are utilized in answering requests for information. It also avails itself of trade journals published in this country and of the assistance of commercial organizations.

Publications.

Information collated by the Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce is distributed chiefly through its publications, which include a daily trade journal and monthly, quarterly, annual, and special bulletins.

Announcements of specific opportunities for the sale of American goods abroad and other matters of a confidential character are furnished only to American firms, through the "Trade Opportunity" service and the confidential bulletins and circulars of the Bureau.

Commerce Reports, a daily journal, contains articles submitted by consular officers and commercial agents of the Department of Commerce and trade information from other sources. It is the organ through which current information on foreign trade matters is distributed to American business men. It is sold by the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing office, Washington, D. C., for \$2.50 per year. (Subscriptions will also be received at the district offices.) The annual reports of consular officers, formerly published in this daily journal, are now issued as supplements to it and are mailed to all subscribers to Commerce Reports.

Monthly Summary of Foreign Commerce gives the imports and exports of the United States by articles, quantities, and values for the month of

issue and for the accumulated period of the year ending with the month of issue, with comparative figures for corresponding periods in the two preceding years. It is sold by the Superintendent of Documents for 15 cents per copy or \$1.50 a year.

Imports Entered for Consumption, which is issued quarterly, gives a detailed statement of the quantity and value of imports into the United States, the rates of duty, and the amount of duty collected. It is sold by the Superintendent of Documents for 75 cents a year; single copies, 15 to 25 cents.

Commerce and Navigation, an annual volume of about 900 quarto pages, gives detailed statistics of the foreign trade of the United States, stating the countries to which each article or class of articles was exported and from which each article or class of articles was imported during a five-year period. It is sold by the Superintendent of Documents for \$1.

Statistical Abstract of the United States, an annual volume of about 800 pages, contains a condensed statement of the commerce, production, industries, population, finance, currency, and wealth of the country, with summary statements of the commerce of the principal foreign countries. It is sold by the Superintendent of Documents for 50 cents.

Bulletins on Special Subjects.

Special bulletins published by the Bureau embrace a wide range of subjects. Some present a survey of the entire world's markets for certain lines of goods; others contain an intensive study of particular fields and particular lines; still others furnish a general study of some country or groups of countries.

Bulletins have been issued on the cotton-goods trade of almost every country in the world; other bulletins deal with cottonseed oil, lumber, shoes and leather, machine tools, paints and varnishes, motor vehicles, musical instruments, canned goods, etc.

Special handbooks have been issued on Australia, New Zealand, Russia, South America, Dominican Republic, Canada, Alaska, Hawaii, and the Philippines, British India, etc. Still other special publications deal with such subjects as foreign credits, packing, and transportation rates.